



Rotary Club of Altadena

Sparks

OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL
AN AWARD-WINNING NEWSLETTER



November 09, 2017

This Week's Program

Michael Driebe
District 5300
Foundation Chair
Program Host:
Dennis Mehringer



Do you find The Rotary Foundation a bit of a mystery? Ever wondered about how matching funds work, how global grants

are awarded, or where the District's grant money comes from?

All these questions and more will be answered on Thursday. Most important, you'll learn about how The Rotary Foundation makes a very real and positive difference in the lives of those it serves

Driebe also oversees all aspects of fund raising programs, budget and operations for the Methodist Hospital Foundation..

Please join us to get the latest about the Rotary Foundation from District Foundation Chair Michael Driebe. ○



Dialing In

By Steve Kerekes,
President



Which is it . . . True, Fair, or Beneficial?

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth.

*And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out.*

Polonius to Reynaldo.
Hamlet, Act II, Scene 1

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The *4-Way Test* implores us to be truthful, AND fair, AND Beneficial, while building Goodwill along the way. But are all these things compatible, or is it a balancing act? This week and next week's selections are taken from an essay by Frank Deaver, Professor Emeritus of Journalism at the University of Alabama and a member of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It can be found in its original form at <https://www.rghfhome.org/first100/presidents/1954taylor/taylor/ethicsand-more.htm#.Wf48sjtrwdU>

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We are assaulted daily in the media with news about ethics, from the corporate and government sectors in particular, but also from athletics, the behavior of both coaches and athletes. It is not only the questionable ethics of the

people in the news, but the ethics of the media in their reporting. In spite of having spent my career in journalism, don't expect me to be an apologist for sloppy reporting!

Ethics is defined in various ways, but central to any definition is that ethics is decision-making – decision-making based on individual responsibility for making right decisions. Ethics is not just what is imposed by law, not just what is defined in company policy, not just what is written into a code. Ethics is more than what is expected by civilized society. Ethics rises above each, and all, of those standards. Ethics is the choice to do what is right, not because it is required or expected, but because it is **RIGHT**. That requires making sometimes hard decisions. But therein is ethics.

Allow me to take you through some situations, and consideration of some decisions

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Greeter of the Week

November 09

Sterling Louviere

November 16

Tom McCurry

November 23

Dark ~ Thanksgiving

Program Review

Gorton Anniversary Trip to Central Europe



Showing an appreciation for history and architecture with an impressive fluency in German pronunciation, Jim Gorton presented highlights from his recent 30th anniversary trip to central Europe. Unlike his typical approach - he and Karen actually planned a major trip for this life milestone by booking a Viking Danube River cruise.

Beginning in beautiful Budapest, Hungary

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Meets: Thursday, 12:10p

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Photography Jacque Foreman

the Gortons enjoyed views of the parliament building, the famous Chain Bridge - the first bridge built over the Danube in 1840. They also were able to visit the Buda's Castle District and Saint Matthias Church (near the Fisherman's Bastion). The Turks occupied Buda in the 1500s - and turned the church into a mosque. The interior was restored in the 19th century in a folk Hungarian motif.

Back on the boat and toward Vienna they had a view of the Esztergom Basilica. This was destroyed

by the Turks and rebuilt in the 1840s. This is the largest church in Hungary. Once in Vienna they started with the Belvedere Palace - the summer home of Prince Eugene of Savoy. Prince Eugene was important in defeating the Ottomans allowing the real estate used for the city wall to be put to other purposes. This magnificent baroque palace was tuned into a public art gallery by Maria Theresa in 1722.

Schonbrunn Palace was next on the schedule - the summer palace of the Habsburgs. This 1441 room baroque palace was a way to tell the French - "we can do Versailles too."

In the center of Vienna is Saint Stephen's Cathedral. Jim enjoyed the restored altar



piece and the whimsical pulpit with relief portraits of four saints (Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory and Jerome) - in four different stages of life with four different temperaments. A stone puppy at the top "protects" the preacher from the carved toads and lizards climbing the handrail.

The Hapsburg Imperial Palace is in the inner city center. This was royal family's winter residence. With the defeat of the Ottomans and the removal of the city wall

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Congratulations



Birthdays



11/06 - Mindy Kittay
11/08 - Sterling Louviere
11/09 - David Campbell
11/13 - Ed Jasnow
11/20 - Steve Kerekes



Anniversaries



11/01 - Jacque Foreman & Bruce Conroy

November

Rotary Foundation

Program Chair, Dennis Mehringer

Nov. 09 - Michael Driebe

Nov. 16 - Haissam Alrachid

Setting up Your My Rotary Account on the Rotary International Website



Anyone can create an account. You don't have to be a Rotary member, but your access to certain areas is determined by your membership and role in Rotary.

To create an account go to <www.rotary.org> . Click on *My Rotary*. Click on *Register for an account*. After answering a few questions, you'll be sent an Email asking you to activate your account. The best browsers to use are Chrome, Firefox,

Safari, or Internet Explorer.

When you sign in, you will receive a custom experience and access to tools including a customized homepage. You can stay signed into the site for as long as 28 days if *remember me* is selected when you sign in.

To go to your profile, select your name at the top of the page. Only Rotary members, Rotaract members, and verified Rotary alumni can share their profiles with each other.

In addition, you have control over what

information you share. Next to any profile item is a **lock** icon which you can select to control your settings. An open lock indicates you are sharing that information.

Your Rotary Resume section displays information that Rotary has for you in their database. If you see an error in your resume send an email to <data@rotary.org> .

Once you have your account set up, you can check your Foundation Giving status, gain access to online tools, and explore featured links.

Give it a try!



Program

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officials added parks, the ring road, the State Opera House, the Hapsburg Library and other structures.

The last stop in Vienna was the Central Cemetery. The cemetery was a Victorian invention. To encourage its use the remains of the city's most famous were moved there.

From Vienna it was off to wine country - Krems and the Wachau Valley. Here you view Durnstein Castle where Richard the II was held for ransom after the crusades.

Where the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers meet is the city of Passau. Also known as The Three Rivers City it is famous for the Veste Oberhaus, a 13th century fortress.

Known for its well-preserved medieval buildings and towers is the town of Regensburg. This town was important to the

salt trade.

Further on the Gortons saw the Weltenburg Abby. Founded in 600 A.D. by Irish Benedictine Monks it has become famous for their beer.

The last destination we had time for was Nuremberg. As the place where the Holy Roman Emperor was crowned

the Nazis had a great fondness for the city.

Great trip - great photos. Thanks, Jim for sharing them with us.



Dialing

Continued from p. 1

that will perhaps help us put the Four-Way Test to an increasingly meaningful application. Let me first take you on a vicarious trip.

On your vacation, you and a lifelong friend go to the Great Smoky Mountains on a hiking expedition. On a precarious climb, your friend falls down a steep slope, cracks his skull against a boulder, and lies bleeding and unconscious. You manage to get him back up on the trail, and somehow summon the strength to carry him to your car. You drive him to the nearest town, where there is a small, private hospital.

As you approach the hospital, you recall that your friend is self-employed and has no medical insurance, while you work for a large company and have full coverage with the group. You are concerned that, with no insurance, he might be sent on to a more distant public hospital. So quickly you switch bill-folds with your unconscious friend. He is identified by your name, your insurance information goes on the hospital record, and your friend gets the emergency treatment you are convinced he needs.

A doctor later tells you that he will be fine, but he is very lucky to have such a dedicated friend who got him treated quickly – for without early emergency treatment he almost certainly would have died.

Now I pose for you a pair of troubling questions.

- First, is truth-telling an absolute principle that should not have been violated, even under such circumstances as these?
- Second, does the end justify the means? Does saving the life of a friend justify the lie, and what amounts to the *stealing* of services?

On the one hand, we are confronted with principles that could be considered

absolute. To lie is wrong. To steal is wrong. But if we do not allow for an exception in this instance, your friend might have died.

On the other hand, desirable results may tempt us to argue that the end justifies the means. A life was saved because of a misrepresentation and the acquiring of services that otherwise might have been withheld.

The Four-Way Test *Of the things we think, say or do*

First

Is it the **TRUTH**?

Second

Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?

Third

Will it build **GOOD WILL**
and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?

Fourth

Will it be **BENEFICIAL**
to all concerned?

But if we universalize this justification, we would then be required to agree to many wrongs, even some criminal acts, if it could be argued that some good purpose was served.

What I have related is a true story. It happened a few years ago to two friends from New Orleans, and they were convicted of theft by deception. But that was in response to the law. In terms of the ethics of our 4WT, how do we balance questions 1 and 4 – TRUTH and BENEFICIAL?

What we have introduced – and what we face almost daily in our professions, our businesses, our personal lives – is the classic struggle between two important eth-

ical considerations in our decision-making – **Principle** and **Pragmatism**. Examples are so very common among us that most of them go unrecognized.

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Some few months ago, a team of doctors sought to separate 29-year-old twins, congenitally joined at the head. The patients died. Medical ethicists debated whether the doctors were justified in attempting to give them a better life, in spite of the risks. **Principle versus Pragmatism**.

A few years ago, 85 children and their teachers were taken hostage at West End Christian School in my home-town, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The governor of the state promised in a telephone call and in a videotaped message that if the gunman would come out peacefully without harming the children, he would be granted the press conference he requested and would be pardoned. But when he emerged in response to this promise, he was pinned violently to the ground, handcuffed, and led away to jail, screaming "...but the governor promised...."

Was the obvious lie justified, in that it resulted in ending the crisis with no physical harm to any of the children? Or were the children taught by demonstration that the authorities are not to be trusted? Do we justify a decision because *it works*? Or do we stand on principle and insist that truth should have been maintained? How shall we balance TRUTH against BENEFICIAL?

Many states have struggled with controversy over legalized gambling – whether casinos, lotteries, race tracks, or bingo. Many believe that gambling is wrong as a matter of principle. Proponents tout its financial benefits, especially when other revenue sources dry up. Still, if gambling is deemed

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Dialing

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morally wrong, the justification violates principle. How shall we balance FAIRNESS against BENEFICIAL?

And perhaps most seriously of all, we are pitting principle against practicality in the matter of human life, both at its beginning and at its ending. Without straying into a debate on the controversies of abortion and assisted death, let me point out the dichotomy that, in the heat of emotion, is commonly overlooked.

- Those who identify with the *woman's freedom of choice* position, may in effect say, "If you don't believe in abortion, don't have an abortion. But it's my choice what I believe or do." This underscores the practicality of individual rights.
- On the other hand, those who identify with the *right-to-life* position argue that,

as a matter of principle, they speak for the unborn, that a woman's choice deprives another being – the unborn child – of the opportunity for life outside the womb.

The two sides will likely not ever compromise so long as one appeals to an absolute principle and the other to a practical position.

At the other end of life, we are caught up in ongoing news of assisted death of the terminally ill, and in debates on when – or even if – it is ever justifiable to pull the plug on life support systems.

Many hold as a matter of principle that life is forever precious, and that families and doctors have no right to *play God* with the life of another.

But those faced with prolonged and

hopeless suffering may conclude that heroic medical measures are not really preserving life but only demonstrating the ability of modern medical science to maintain bodily functions in what would otherwise be a corpse.

Again, we are left with a hopeless dilemma that cannot be compromised so long as some appeal to an unbending principle and others to a tempting practicality.

So it is, fellow Rotarians, that, in the examples we have considered, our attempt is to recognize that sometimes principle and practicality clash, and ethics calls on us to seek a process of intelligent decision making.

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Next week – how do we reconcile the principles of the 4-Way Test? ○

**SECOND
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Second Saturday

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October 14	<i>Upstream*</i>	March 10	<i>DeRumba</i>
November 11	<i>The Tone Brothers</i>	April 14	<i>Kenny Sara and the Sounds of New Orleans</i>
December 2	<i>Upbeat Swing Orchestra</i>	May 12	<i>The Podunk Poets</i>
January 13	<i>Kai Clark with special guests John York & Carla Olson</i>	June 9	<i>Crown City Bombers</i>
February 10	<i>Gerry Rothschild Band</i>		



*October 14th's Second Saturday Concert featuring Upstream is sponsored by the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

All other Second Saturday Concerts are supported in part by funds received from the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation.

Free live music, delicious food and drink, and good friends... all right around the corner!



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